

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

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-----002050 300230Z /73  
P 292354Z JUN 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CVIS, EEW, RO

SUBJECT: RECENT NIMETZ/NICOLAE MEETINGS ON MFN/EMIGRATION

1. SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR NICOLAE HAS HAD TWO RECENT MEETINGS WITH COUNSELOR NIMETZ, ON JUNE 20 AND JUNE 24, IN WHICH FOCUS OF DISCUSSION WAS CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS AND EMIGRATION. NICOLAE DESCRIBED HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN AND POINTED TO RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN EMIGRATION FIGURES BUT WAS AT PAINS TO POINT OUT THAT THIS DID NOT RPT NOT REFLECT THE EFFECTS OF US "PRESSURE." RATHER, THE INCREASE SHOULD BE SEEN, HE SAID, AS REFLECTING A CONSISTENT POLICY ON THE PART OF THE ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT. NICOLAE ALSO SAID THAT CONGRESSIONAL CRITICISM OF ROMANIA'S EMIGRATION PROCEDURES AND "HARASSMENT" OF APPLICANTS MAY PRODUCE AN UNFAVORABLE REACTION IN BUCHAREST. END SUMMARY

2. ON JUNE 20, NICOLAE TOLD NIMETZ THAT HE WAS "IMPRESSED" WITH PRESIDENT CARTER'S MESSAGE TO CONGRESS RECOMMENDING  
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WAIVER EXTENSION. NICOLAE HAD MET THAT MORNING WITH SENATOR RIBICOFF, WHO EXPRESSED CONCERN ABOUT JEWISH EMIGRATION LEVELS. NICOLAE SAID HE EXPLAINED THE ROMANIAN PERSPECTIVE AND THOUGHT HE REACHED SOME UNDERSTANDING WITH RIBICOFF. RIBICOFF HAD ASKED HOW MANY JEWS REMAINED IN ROMANIA. NICOLAE SAID HE RESPONDED THAT THE "OFFICIAL" FIGURE WAS ABOUT 25,000, AS REFLECTED IN THE RECENT CENSUS.

HE SAID HE ADDED THAT HE HAD NO RIGHT TO EXPRESS A PERSONAL OPINION. NICOLAE SAID THE GOR HAD APPROVED 772 REQUESTS TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL AS OF JUNE 14, 1977. HE COMPARED THIS TO A TOTAL OF 1667 APPROVALS FOR EMIGRATION TO ISRAEL IN 1976. HE ADDED THAT ONLY 32 PENDING REQUESTS ON THE PART OF ROMANIAN JEWS HAD NOT YET BEEN PROCESSED. WITH REGARD TO THE US, NICOLAE SAID THERE WERE 957 APPROVALS AS OF JUNE 14, 1977, COMPARED TO 1055 APPROVALS FOR ALL OF 1976. OVERALL, AS OF JUNE 14, THE GOR HAD APPROVED 8601 EMIGRATION REQUESTS THIS YEAR, AS COMPARED TO 6742 APPROVALS FOR 1976. NICOLAE COMMENTED THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF APPROVALS FOR THIS YEAR WILL BE "PRACTICALLY DOUBLE" THE TOTAL FOR LAST YEAR. HE SAID IT WAS NOT A QUESTION OF CHANGING ROMANIA'S EMIGRATION POLICY BUT OF EASING AND FACILITATING THE APPROVAL PROCESS. NICOLAE SAID HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY THERE IS "TROUBLE" WITH REGARD TO ROMANIAN EMIGRATION FIGURES. HE SAID "THERE IS NOTHING MORE THAT I CAN ASK THEM (ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES) TO DO."

3. NIMETZ RESPONDED THAT THERE IS ALWAYS THE QUESTION OF WHETHER PEOPLE ARE BEING DISCOURAGED FROM EMIGRATING. HE SAID THAT WE WILL BE ASKED WHY JEWISH EMIGRATION IS DECLINING. ONE ANSWER MIGHT BE THAT THE NUMBER OF JEWS LEFT IN ROMANIA IS SMALL, BUT ANOTHER MIGHT BE THAT THE ROMANIAN AUTHORITIES ARE MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO APPLY. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NICOLAE RESPONDED THAT "OFFICIALLY", HE HAD TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO PROBLEM. HE ADDED THAT RABBI ROSEN HAD TOLD HIM THERE WAS A PROBLEM WITH SOME CASES, BUT NOT WITH OVERALL NUMBERS. NICOLAE SAID THAT THE "LAST" CASES ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT; E.G., THE CASE OF VLAD MANESCU, WHICH TOOK ALMOST TWO YEARS TO RESOLVE. NICOLAE SAID THAT MOST OF THE 85 DENIALS OF JEWISH EMIGRATION REQUESTS WERE A RESULT OF DEBTS OWED, NOT ACCESS TO STATE SECRETS. ON THE OTHER HAND, NICOLAE SAID, APPLICATIONS TO EMIGRATE BY MEMBERS OF THE GERMAN MINORITY WERE A DIFFERENT PROBLEM AND MORE DIFFICULT TO RESOLVE. BECAUSE OF THE NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE ROMANIAN ECONOMY, "A LOT OF REQUESTS" WERE BEING DENIED. NEVERTHELESS, ROMANIA IS TRYING TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM OVER THE LONG TERM IN A FLEXIBLE MANNER. ROMANIA CANNOT ALLOW EMIGRATION TO EACH COUNTRY TO INCREASE CONSTANTLY, BUT IT WILL FOLLOW A POLICY OF REUNITING DIVIDED FAMILIES.

4. ON JUNE 24, NICOLAE TOLD NIMETZ THAT HE HAD CONTINUED HIS CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS, INCLUDING CONGRESSMEN LONG, VANIK, BINGHAM, AND WHALEN, AND SENATORS JACKSON AND RIBICOFF. HE SAID THAT HE HAD FOUND

THE ATMOSPHERE GOOD AND THOUGHT THAT "MAYBE WE WILL

BE ALL RIGHT." HE SAID THAT CONGRESS NOW APPEARS NOT RPT NOT TO BE INTERESTED IN INCREASING THE NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS, BUT IS CONCENTRATING ON "HARASSMENT". NICOLAE SAID THAT THE GOR DOES NOT HARASS APPLICANTS BUT APPLIES RULES UNIFORMLY. THE LARGER FLOW OF EMIGRANTS SHOWS THAT THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION OF HARASSMENT. NICOLAE SAID THAT THE ROMANIAN EMIGRATION POLICY SHOULD BE CONSIDERED A JOINT US-ROMANIAN POLICY. IT IS GOOD FOR THE US AND FOR SENATOR JACKSON, HE COMMENTED. SOME WORDS OF PRAISE ARE IN ORDER. IF, HOWEVER, THE FOCUS SHIFTS TO "HARASSMENT" AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE HEARINGS IS HOSTILE, THE REACTION IN BUCHAREST WILL NOT BE FAVORABLE. NICOLAE SAID HE HAD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DISCUSSED THIS WITH SENATOR JACKSON, AS WELL AS THE NEED TO "IMPROVE" THE AGREEMENT.

5. NIMETZ RESPONDED THAT ROMANIA SHOULD EXPECT SOME CRITICISM AT THE HEARINGS. WITH REGARD TO JEWISH EMIGRATION, WE BELIEVE THAT SOME APPLICANTS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO HANDLE THE ARRANGEMENTS. FURTHER, WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND WHY JEWISH EMIGRATION SHOULD BE A PROBLEM FOR ROMANIA, SINCE THE NUMBER REMAINING IS SO SMALL. SECONDLY, THE PROCEDURES DO APPEAR ONEROUS AND REQUIRE APPLICANTS TO COMPLETE MANY STEPS BEFORE APPROVAL. NICOLAE RETORTED THAT THE 5-YEAR WAITING PERIOD TO RECEIVE US CITIZENSHIP APPEARS EQUALLY ONEROUS. "PERHAPS WE DO NOT WANT TO SEND OUR PEOPLE HERE WITHOUT THE SURE GUARANTEE THAT THEY WILL RECEIVE US CITIZENSHIP." CHRISTOPHER

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